

**MINUTES OF THE
WEST LAFAYETTE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
May 17, 2004**

Redevelopment Commission members present: Steve Belter, Patsy Hoyer, Earle Nay, Chris Corrigan, and Sandy Pearlman. Also in attendance: Mayor Jan Mills, Clerk Treasurer Judy Rhodes, City Attorney Bob Bauman, Bev Shaw, Charlotte Martin and Cindy Loerbs-Polley of the Development Department, Tom Gall of TJ Gall & Associates, Public Information Officer Wyatt Hornsby, City Council member Patti O'Callaghan, Steve Hardesty and John Collier from Hawkins Environmental, and citizens and members of the media.

Mr. Belter called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm. Were the appropriate open door notices posted and sent to the media? (*Directed to Ms. Polley*) Ms. Polley stated yes they were.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Nay made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 19, 2004 meeting. Ms. Hoyer seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Belter stated that the next item of business is the approval of the trustee to pay claims. Have all the appropriate people reviewed and approved the claims? (*Directed to Ms. Martin*) Ms. Martin answered yes. Mr. Nay made a motion to approve the payment of claims. Ms. Pearlman seconded.

Mr. Gall gave an update on the trails projects. I believe that Mr. Payne and his department have developed a fairly lengthy punch list that they are working on with Milestone on the main portion of the trails project. We have some utilities to relocate with the Friendship House segment. We are having a little trouble getting a response from Verizon about what exactly they are going to do. There are some significant costs involved, which can be dealt with either by the contingency or the Milestone contract. Insight is ready to go though.

Mr. Belter asked for an update on the library. Mr. Gall stated that the conduit work is going in on Chauncey Street. We are trying to get out of the way of the library's work and struggling with getting across the eastern portion. They've been very accommodating. We will move down North Street with sidewalk demolition and conduit installation to the corner of North Street and also going up the alley.

Mr. Belter asked if there were any other questions regarding the claims. None were made. The motion to authorize the claims passed unanimously 3-0.

Mr. Andrew stated that we've got Steve Hardesty and John Collier here to give the Commission an update on Sagamore West as to where we are and where we are headed.

Mr. Corrigan arrived.

Mr. Hardesty stated that we were asked by the Development Department to do some work on several different initiatives. Some of those included sidewalk initiatives and we are going to come up with an overall plan for the Sagamore area to have a system of sidewalks to get to various places. We are working closely with the interns on doing an analysis of where people live and where they might want to go to. We have some ideas with where we want to go on that but we are not quite done with that analysis yet. We anticipate having something in the next month as far as an overall system.

As far as crosswalks go, we need to do an inventory of where crosswalks are and where we might need some crosswalks in the area. We will be working with INDOT and the City to upgrade the crosswalks that we presently have, by adding signs or markings on the pavement. We would like to get that type of work done this summer.

We are also working on lighting and banners for the Parkway. We've asked Mr. Gall to assist us with that because he has lighting experience in dealing with the utility companies and with several people at city hall. I think that Mr. Gall will be helpful in getting that moving along. We'd like to try to put together a project by the end of the year that we can get under contract to do some portion of it. We will look at the overall system costs and make some decisions from that.

The other thing that we want to do is the gateway initiative, which deals with the ends of the Sagamore West area and some portions in between. John Collier is going to come on board to help us in that area. He brings a wealth of experience and volunteerism to the community. He's come to talk a little today about what his challenges are and what his area of work is going to be.

We are also looking into traffic initiatives. One is at US 52 and Salisbury. We want to try to see what kinds of improvements might be needed in the future. We want to plan for what future roadways may be needed so that when we have development that comes along, we can accommodate that in the future. We don't want to put a building or a parking lot where we may in the future need a roadway. There is also the possibility that we might be able to use some federal funds if there are safety problems at the intersection.

US 52 and Yeager Road is another area that we want to look at trying to solve some congestion problems. Primarily because of State Farm and the Research Park, there are at many times, some very heavy movement and congestion at that intersection that could possibly be improved.

The next initiative that we are working on is access for new businesses because the key to a business being successful along there is having a good access. Part of that is dealing with improvements that are either planned or under construction at this particular time. We've already been working with developers on the ED-AN property, which used to be Osco Jewel. It is well underway. Very early on we worked with them on the layout for the parking lot with an anticipation that some day we would try to get a traffic signal at that entrance. We still have a long way to go with that. We have to convince the highway department that it is a good place to have a traffic signal and that it is worthy of having one. It is a tough struggle but we will be pushing for that towards the end of the year.

The other area that we are working with is the Marsh development. They are looking at changing their internal structure. We looked at what we felt would be needs for pedestrians and for access in ways that we felt we could improve it. We worked with them very early on in the project and made some suggestions and they seemed to be interested in accommodating many of those. We are continuing to work with them and APC on those developments.

The last one on my list is a signal and timing initiative. The Department of Transportation has decided to implement what we call a signal system on US 52 to promote flow. Part of that was the need for us to come in and help if the city chooses to have us look at some of the timings that they've done and make some suggestions in making sure that the city's interests are looked after. Also, to look at the intersection of Salisbury and Navajo if needed.

Those are the areas that we are working on. We have a lot on our plate to do this year. We've gotten started on many of these and hopefully we'll have some stuff by the end of the year. Our goal is to get something built this year, even if it is small. I'll turn the floor over to Mr. Collier.

Mr. Collier used maps to reference the gateways and locations. It is all very generic at this point and I have only highlighted the areas where I am looking to be more consistent with the brand. There is a big open hillside as soon as you come across the river to provide a welcome sign that says West Lafayette as well as a sign that says Sagamore West. In the future, there might be an opportunity in conjunction with the bridge, to create an overlook as part of the bridge but as a separate entity that will ultimately connect to the bridge. I think it would nicely tie into the gateway. I've got lots of ideas in my head but am not sure exactly how that can happen just yet. I guess I'm looking for some ideas and inspiration from any of you as well to make this concrete. On the same token, at the northwest end at Hentschel Boulevard where it intersects with US 231, it's a more difficult problem because while it is also a gateway to the city, we don't have a nice open field to establish a great gateway. My idea is that we can develop something where we can use the same materials and try to incorporate those materials throughout Sagamore West and not just at the two ends. That will help to tie into consistency as well as give us an opportunity to name it as Sagamore West. It may not be a duplicate at both ends because the sites are different.

The other obstacle that we encounter when you look at this stretch of road is that once you start on the bend from 52 to 231, if you are new to the community, I think that people have a sense that they are leaving the area. I think it is important in that area that we don't give them the idea that they are leaving, rather we need to give them the sense that it is continuing on. I think that there are opportunities at that spot for a reminder with maybe an architectural feature similar to the gateways to be placed there. I also think that there are great opportunities in that area as well for landscaping, to really enhance that area. It is not being maintained very well by the state and it isn't very esthetically pleasing. It would serve as the connector between the two ends of Sagamore West. We've been calling that area the midway versus the gateway. I think that we can also consider in the future that if we do some small element or feature that helps tie these two gateways together, we could do something much smaller at some of the other intersections as well. It could be something as simple as a marker as long as it is an element that is consistent. I think that in conjunction with street lights, the way that you address street trees, and landscaping will all help brand the area as Sagamore West. It will be a lot more effective and certainly a lot more esthetically pleasing.

Mr. Nay asked if it would be possible to take advantage of Soldiers Home Road Bridge to mount a greeting or decorative item on the bridge above the drivers as they drive in. Mr. Hardesty stated that it would probably be difficult to get the State Highway to agree to things like that. I know that they don't like to have things attached to the bridge. Even for their own facilities, they don't attach things to bridges.

Mr. Belter stated that it is probably a maintenance issue as well. Mr. Hardesty stated that he would suspect so because every time they would rehab them, they'd have to deal with that device that has been put on there. It makes it a little difficult.

Mr. Collier stated that back when all the discussions with the groups were going on, we had discussed putting a welcome on the bridge but I think now that it would be better if we could try to develop something that is separate from that because we have this great hillside with nothing there. We should take advantage of that. The bridge itself is really not that attractive. So my thoughts now are that we should just paint the bridge so that it disappears as much as possible and keep the focus off to the side where we want people to look.

Ms. Hoyer stated that I drove through the area the other day to try to see where my line of vision was and saw a couple of things that I had not noticed before. Mr. Collier stated that I really look at the area differently now. I'm always looking in other cities to see how different situations are treated.

Mr. Collier referred to a map stating that this one is the most difficult site of all when you are coming from the north, down into this corridor. There are already lots of existing signs such as the Great Lakes sign, the Speedway sign, and the Research Park sign. I keep leaning towards something over here (*pointed to the map*), but in an ideal world I think that you want it prior to Hentschel Boulevard because these people are all part of Sagamore West. If you put it here (*pointed to map*) then you've almost lost it. These are all issues, as well as finding out who owns what, and can we do something small enough that would stay in the right of way, and that INDOT would approve of.

Mr. Belter stated that the last I knew, the entrance to the Research Park on Hentschel Boulevard was being used as the main entrance to the Park. Mr. Collier stated that is exactly why they went to the expense of that big sign at that intersection.

Mr. Collier switched his maps to the "midway" area. He pointed to different spots stating that these are opportune areas for features of some kind.

Mr. Collier stated that he drove the area last night and it is very dark. That sends a very bad message to anyone that is looking for something after nightfall. They might think that they are out of city limits now. Mr. Belter stated that one way of tying this all together is with distinctive lighting.

Ms. Hoyer stated that she was, at one time, on a committee and we were looking at art work for hilltop to hilltop. As we look at these possibilities, this may be something to think about with using public art. Mr. Collier stated that we are starting to get more and more artwork on campus because we have a Visual Arts Committee that courts artists and asks them to submit proposals for loan pieces and it really is cheap. Most of these pieces have been sitting in artist's studios or garages being wasted and they love the opportunity to display their work. I believe

that a piece is roughly about \$1,000 for a 2 year hold and you usually have to pay them to move it, which is another \$500 and then another \$500 for them to carry it away at the end. \$2,000 total for an art piece to be displayed for 2 years is a great deal. Some of them will even offer us to keep it for longer.

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that there seems to be a window of opportunity for some INDOT money for beautification. Do you know what kind of time frame they were thinking for that? Mr. Hardesty stated that is one of the tasks that I'll be working on. I need to see what we need to do to qualify for that money this year.

Ms. Shaw stated that the trees are another way that the money might be used. The Tree Fund is coming up with a plan of what can go where if the Ash trees die. As we tie this whole Sagamore West plan together, you can see that couldn't happen unless you had a lighting plan, a banner plan, and a gateway plan to know what is going to happen in order for this to take place.

Mr. Nay stated that he wanted to discuss the pedestrian ways. Have you developed any design goals for the sidewalks along east and west of Sagamore as far as having a goal for a sidewalk on at least one side of Sagamore for the whole length? Mr. Hardesty stated that is not a concrete goal to accomplish that. What we are doing right now is identifying high concentrations of housing units and identifying places that people want to go; pedestrian oriented destinations. There are some things that people wouldn't necessarily walk to but there are other things that are recognized that people do walk to frequently. The criteria that we are using is that people will generally not walk more than a half mile. That is one of the criteria that is used for the bus route. Beyond that, we aren't going to be attracting many people then. Based on those high concentrations of populations, we are looking at certain quadrants that are part of the area that we can identify where people will actually be walking. We don't have a goal to say lets walk up and down US 52, our goal is to try to serve the most people with the best sidewalks that we can. That means that we'll probably recognize that there are five locations to get across US 52 but we aren't going to be pushing for anymore. We are probably going to be looking at people going to a particular area, for instance, the Navajo East area with people attracted to things going on along the old Kmart and Marsh but they are going to be so far away that they aren't going to be walking beyond Payless or west of there. Those will probably have sidewalks that get to quadrants with ways to get across US 52 and then to find opportunities within these developments to try to have a sidewalk going east and west. For example, through the Wabash Village area, we've identified and encouraged them to put in a sidewalk that goes from Salisbury Street all the way to Nighthawk. They have agreed to do that. This has eliminated the need to put in a sidewalk along US 52 where you don't really want to walk along the cars anyway. We want to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. We hope to have that network solidified within the next couple of weeks. Right now we've just identified the linkages.

Mr. Nay stated that in observing pedestrian traffic along Sagamore Parkway numerous times, I think that in conjunction with the whole concept of making it a walkable community, I would disagree a little bit and think that the long term goal should be that we have a sidewalk on every street. There is a lot of walking traffic on the south side of Sagamore Parkway.

Mr. Hardesty stated that we will continue with the sidewalks that have already been started such as in front of CVS. We will be putting some additional sidewalks in as part of the agreement with the ED-AN property because the city has agreed to at least get to that property back to Salisbury. It may be as times change and businesses change that we will take advantage

of opportunities. In the near term, we don't see those businesses along Burger King changing. Twenty five years from now we don't know what is going to happen in that area. I think that is a reasonable goal when you look at it from that standpoint. It's very difficult to go back in and retro fit some of those really tight areas specifically when you get to Mr. & Mrs. Tire with those hillsides. They are extremely difficult to change, but if a change is in and we get a new opportunity, we need to be sensitive to that. We are trying to develop a long term plan starting with our first goal of where most of the people are and getting them to the things that they would typically want to walk to. Then we can see what opportunities we have to try to create a system from the existing sidewalks and the streets.

Mr. Nay stated that he had the opportunity to use the trail system and when it came time to cross at Cumberland and Sagamore Parkway, the light was just long enough for three of us to get into the street and it seemed painfully short. I really look forward to the opportunity to maybe depressing those crossings like we've talked about with the consultant because they are really too close to the intersection.

The second thing is a little off Sagamore Parkway but it appears to me to be a traffic issue. At Navajo and Sagamore, there is an entrance into Wabash Shores that is just one sidewalk away from Navajo and is a really rough right turn. Will there be some discussion about moving it further north into the parking lot? It can't be standard anymore. Mr. Hardesty said you are right on target. We've already addressed that and it is already in the plan. We've worked with them to move that to be just behind the new Starbucks. The whole corridor behind Starbucks, Arby's and MCL will be more like a street with landscaping and sidewalks. Mr. Bauman stated that we have been working with the Marsh people for some time on that and we are really very excited by the amount of cooperation that we've had. That planned development will be formally going to the Area Plan Commission fairly soon.

Mr. Nay asked if they (Marsh) are refurbishing existing structure or are they going to start from the ground up. Mr. Andrew stated that they are adding on. Mr. Bauman stated that they need to stay open and in doing some of the improvements in that area, you are working around a number of existing conditions.

Mr. Hardesty stated that the parking lot will be totally reconfigured with trees and island areas.

Mr. Belter asked if the PEFCU ATM will stay where it is. Mr. Hardesty stated that it will move. From what we have seen most recently, it will be between the new east to west roadway and the Starbucks. It would get you out of the flow of normal traffic and turn into their own space and they'll get better visibility too.

Ms. Pearlman asked a question pointing to the maps for areas that she sees problems with crossing 52. Mr. Hardesty stated that it is an area that we are going to be trying to improve across the bridge by connecting the sidewalks. There are two apartment complexes on the left side and I see that as being a real need in that area to connect the sidewalk on that west side down to the existing trail that was constructed on the north side of US 52 and also to connect that into the portion of the bridge where you can safely cross and then from that south end of the bridge to tie it down to Ivory Tower.

Discussion over one another was made in reference to the changes that will be made at the Marsh location while reviewing the map but couldn't be understood clearly.

Mr. Hardesty stated that we've also asked them to make sure that this parking lot is back far enough so that if the city should choose, at some point in time to widen the roadway in order to put in a double left turn lane to keep the traffic flowing so that we have less back up through Navajo, we want to be able to accommodate that in the future.

Mr. Belter asked what the timing is for the Marsh expansion and that area's construction. Mr. Bauman stated that he isn't sure. They are expected to move ahead shortly with the formal planned development approval process and they'll have to do that before they begin.

Ms. Mills stated that there have been a lot of people and hours working on the Sagamore project from the beginning of the year and it has been incredible. We've focused a lot of time and attention and we're excited about what's happened so far.

Mr. Belter asked if Mr. Gall had anything to add. Mr. Gall stated that he has been working with Mr. Hardesty on options on how to better light Sagamore Parkway or to find the correct goal such as making it more retail friendly or to add banners. This district doesn't have a large amount of funds available. You can easily eat them all up with any one of these initiatives. I've been trying to look at options for the lighting package with how to accomplish better lighting and still having the goal with something that looks better and is more retail oriented while welcoming you to the area. Ms. Mills stated that I believe that's why Mr. Hardesty mentioned that we are doing it in a several year plan and phase. Mr. Gall stated that it is also very important that you don't lock yourself in on how we are going to do this and then just go down that path. There are potentially several options to obtaining the goal with different dollar impacts.

Ms. Mills stated that Bike to Work Day is this Friday leaving from the southern most shelter in Cumberland Park starting at 7:30 am. Mr. Hornsby stated that all of the information is posted on the website as well.

Mr. Belter asked if there were any other comments for the Commission.

Mr. Andrew stated that we will have some announcements on developments for the next meeting.

Mr. Gall stated that the cameras are up and running in the garage. There is a full time parking manager in the garage. I heard that they were going to start closing the gates and charging as of this morning. The manager is also taking the time to visit with the skateboarders and letting them know that they aren't allowed in the garage. She is making great efforts there.

Ms. O'Callaghan asked what the rates will be for the garage. Mr. Gall stated that it will be \$1 for three hours and could be validated at least at Borders if not at some of the other stores.

Mr. Belter asked if there were any other questions. None were made.

The Commission scheduled their next two meetings for June 21st at noon and July 19th at 11:00 am.

Mr. Nay made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Pearlman seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 1:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis Earle Nay, Recording Secretary

Approved:

Stephen Belter, President

/clp

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